TRAPPED ON EARTH IN THE LAND OF THE SKY: TELLABILITY AND CULTURAL IMPACT IN THE GHOSTLY LEGENDS OF ZELDA FITZGERALD AND THE PINK LADY IN ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

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ABSTRACT:
Megan Odom Tice: Trapped on Earth in the Land of the Sky: Tellability and Cultural Impact in the Ghostly Legends of Zelda Fitzgerald and the Pink Lady in Asheville, North Carolina
(Under the direction of Patricia Sawin)

Legend's shape the culture around them in powerful ways by giving us the language to express ideas often hushed or unexplored by history. Ghost stories in particular are crucial to community identity formation, alerting the modern audience to a gap in our understanding of the past. Ghosts exist in what Folklorist Bill Ellis calls a "legend cycle," but in this paper I explore the idea that ghost stories exist in multiple iterations of this cycle at once, pushing the societal boundaries and shaping the culture around them in different ways for each group the legend cycle operates within. In Asheville, North Carolina two such stories that do this important work are the ghost of Zelda Fitzgerald at the site of the Highland Hospital fire and the Pink Lady at the Grove Park Inn. Both of these women who lived in the twentieth century challenge the twenty-first century teller and listener to explore parts of our communal story that have remained untold for decades. Yet, not all the stories these ghosts could tell are tellable to our modern senses, so even in their culture shaping power they have been limited by time and space. This paper seeks to explore how the various iterations of the legend cycle existing for these two ghost stories change the historical narrative and yet, in a complicated sense, reinforce the cultural ideas set in place by the passage of time.

To my mamaw, Shirley Henderson. You have always anchored me to the mountains and reminded me there is no place more beautiful than home.

Once Again, to Zelda
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Dedication of *The Great Gatsby*

Rumbling down I-40 in the backseat of my grandparent's car, barefoot and content with the sun on my face, I had my first encounter with Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald. Knowing that I was a "busy" child and would quickly melt into hysterics if I became bored on a long car ride, my mamaw was prepared. Sometimes we listened to Elvis cassettes, sometimes she and papaw told me about "the olden days," as I called them, stories of days long past when my grandmother first learned how to drive a car or my papaw taught woodshop at Asheville High during integration. Other times, when she knew it would be an extra long ride, she would get a book and read to me. This particular ride she read to me, from cover to cover, *The Great Gatsby*. She always began with the opening dedication and so the story began, "Once Again, To Zelda." And there the story came to a screeching halt for at least the next hour. Who was Zelda? Why was it dedicated to her? Once again, what came before? Mamaw, being the wonderfully patient woman she is, took the time to tell me what she knew of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Zelda. She talked of their writings and marriage and wild, unpredictable lives and ultimately of Zelda's death in a blazing fire at Highland Hospital. Since that moment Highland Hospital has crackled in my ears.

There is something magical about Asheville in early spring. The flowers start to bloom and everything slowly wakes up as if stumbling about after a deep slumber. The air seems to carry with it the smell of flowers, hope, and something deeper that you cannot quite put your finger on. The ghosts that wander the mountains seem, at least for a short amount of time, more tangible as the seasons change. On March 10 every year residents claim a deep smell of smoke settles across the mountain, carried in as if on the wind and disappearing just as quickly. I have

heard these stories my whole life. They terrified me as a child and shaped me as an adult, yet when I try to pin them down, when I try to ask for details about the smoke or the feeling that is carried in on the spring breeze, I am met with silence--I suppose some stories can never be fully told. Stories that form and transform culture are often like this. Swarming around us in a multitude of ways, sometimes they take form as chocolate oatmeal cookies and other times just the smell of smoke on the wind. Sometimes legends are strange, sometimes they are humorous. Sometimes they form the identity for one family and sometimes for entire communities and, in these moments, culture is made and remade.

What is a legend? Jeannie Banks Thomas describes legends succinctly as "culturally significant stories."[1] Thomas is especially interested, as am I for the purposes of this paper, in the subset of legends that we call ghost stories or tales of supernatural experience. She argues that ghosts are ways of making sense of the world around us and that they move us into the realm of moments of "interest and significance."[2] Bill Ellis further argues that "whatever else we could propose 'a legend' to be, it is not an underlying plot but rather a social impetus to create new narratives in the shape of the old."[3] Legends are, first and foremost, powerful tools of cultural creation that, through the avenues of narration and individual synthesis, both reflect and shape the surrounding community. Ghost stories particularly carry influential power among a society to force individuals to grapple with overarching societal injustices. In her work *Listening for a Life* Folklorist Patricia Sawin articulates the power of ghost stories, "These stories and those who hear and tell them are haunted by the injustice and inequality that constitute this society's dirty

[1] Goldstein, Diane E., Sylvia Ann Grider, and Jeannie B. Thomas. *Haunting Experiences: Ghosts in Contemporary Folklore*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2007.

[2] Ibid., 26.

[3] Ellis, Bill. *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2003.

secrets, by the gender double standard, by men's sanctioned ability to control women, and by the wealthy's capacity to exploit the poor."[4] While Sawin's work is particular to her consultant, Bessie Eldreth, the same influential power of ghost stories can be seen in a wide range of societies including the one examined in this paper. Sociologist Avery Gordon argues that even though hauntings are often ignored by social scientists as unverifiable phenomena, the persistence of narratives around hauntings tells us something significant about our society, namely what things we choose to document and which things we ignore. She argues that the act of the haunting should be evaluated and, in her work, moves hauntings firmly within the boundaries of concrete significance and cultural study. Gordon states, "Haunting is a constituent element of modern social life...to study social life one must confront the ghostly aspects of it. This confrontation produces a fundamental change in the way we know and make knowledge, and in our mode of production."[5] Gordon introduces us to the idea of "transformative recognition" in her work *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination.* Gordon argues that the very act of haunting reveals the gaps in our cultural knowledge, particularly the spaces of injustice. Through this act of haunting the ghost can lead us into areas we may otherwise never explore or question and push the boundaries of cultural understanding further, reshaping the very society we live in. Through these missing stories the ghost is rewriting history to account for the moments never told. All of these scholars argue that the power of a legend lies in its way of creating understanding and cultural synthesis.

[4] Sawin, Patricia. *Listening for a Life: A Dialogic Ethnography of Bessie Eldreth through Her Songs and Stories*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2004.

[5] Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011, 7.

I would build on these definitions to suggest that a legend is a living entity that relies on individuals within a community to cycle through its life. Furthermore there are as many diverse possibilities for the legend cycle to exist and begin again as there are individual people in the community. Ellis's idea of a legend cycle is central to this argument. In Ellis's model, legends have a life cycle in which they follow five steps: first the legend is used to name a marginal experience; next that experience is shared with others, after which the narrative is reduced to "good form" or becomes a tellable story. After the story has been told it becomes a part of the in-group's knowledge, until finally it decays into irrelevance.[6] I would take his idea a step further by arguing that a legend can exist simultaneously in multiple cycles through multiple in-groups, which further complicates the legend's life. If a legend is, as Gordon suggests, a cultural pushback against established norms, and the legend impacts each individual listener and teller differently, it follows that the legend has at least as many possible hosts for legend cycles and cultural change as it has individual listeners. As Ellis states, "A legend is a narrative that challenges accepted definitions of the real world and leaves itself suspended, relying for closure on each individual's response."[7] Because a legend is so dependent upon an individual's response and because it can exist in multiple iterations among multiple groups at any given time, it has substantial power to erase, shape, and reform cultural boundaries across many different spheres. My primary concern in this paper is to explain how individual listeners' responses to the same legend act as cultural barometers as the listeners and narrators move through the legend cycle and how those understandings shape and reshape the culture in the same geographic space, in this case Asheville, North Carolina.

[6] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults*, 61-62.

[7] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults.*

Asheville, North Carolina, also known as the Land of the Sky, has a complex history and social structure. Prior to the arrival of the railroads in the 1880s, many of Asheville's residents were agricultural workers who relied on the land and lived in relative poverty and isolation compared to people in the surrounding regions.[8] In the 1880s with the railroad boom, Asheville's economy diversified to include goods they could export to the rest of the country, and with these new factories came wealthy families from outside of the county to operate them. In addition to those attracted by the new industries, many people came to Asheville for the crisp air and connection to nature, believing it had health benefits to combat many of the prevalent diseases of the day, including tuberculosis.[9] The combination of new industry and healthful climate attracted many wealthy outsiders to the area, but none as influential as George Vanderbilt who came to Asheville in the 1880s and 1890s to build Biltmore Estate. Biltmore is a two hundred and fifty room French Chateau nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains. For the construction of his estate, Vanderbilt brought in many prominent architects such as Richard Morris Hunt and Richard Sharp-Smith and landscape artists such as Fredrick Law Olmstead, designer of Central Park in New York City and the grounds for the World Fair in Chicago.[10]

These newcomers, and the artists they brought with them, built the beautiful art deco downtown that Asheville is famous for even today.[11] When the Great Depression hit Asheville in 1930, the city plummeted into some of the worst debt in the country, however Asheville's leaders swore to repay every penny. This decision meant that no economic growth or additional

[8] "Asheville History: Early Settlement to Downtown Boom." Asheville's History of Resilience. Accessed April 24, 2020. https://www.romanticasheville.com/History.htm.

[9] Ibid.

[10] "Biltmore Estate & George Vanderbilt History." Biltmore Estate History & Vanderbilts. Accessed April 24, 2020. https://www.romanticasheville.com/biltmorececil.htm.

[11] Ibid.

debt could be obtained by the city until the bonds were paid.[12] While many cities around the country tore down and revitalized during the 1950s and 1960s, downtown Asheville remained dormant until, in 1977, the city paid off its last bond.[13] Because Asheville missed the large real estate booms around the rest of the country, its buildings still reflect the style of the early twentieth century, an unintentional consequence of the debt that has made Asheville the charming, nostalgic town it is today. Asheville has since worked to preserve its historic architecture and rebuild itself through revitalization efforts like the River Arts District, the bed and breakfasts all around historic Montford, and the health and spa resorts, particularly the Grove Park Inn. Asheville now positions itself as a liberal haven in an otherwise conservative region, actively pulling in artists and outdoor lovers of all kinds. Yet, this image sits juxtaposed to the quiet nostalgia the city also actively cultivates with an image of the charm of "slower, simpler days," represented both by traditional crafts and the luxury of the Biltmore House or the Grove Park Inn.

The influx of wealthy individuals flooding into Asheville as a health and luxury resort created a stark line between insiders and outsiders that can be felt even today in Asheville and the surrounding communities. In the forward to the book *The Rise of Asheville: An Exceptional History of Community Building,* author Terry Roberts points out,

> One of the results of Western North Carolina's long isolation is there exists a peculiar insider versus outsider view of the region and its people. For those whose ancestors have lived and mostly farmed in the mountains for generations--myself included--there is a fierce pride in who and what we are, a stubborn independence that can often get in the way of an evolving community. For those who come here seeking inspiration or peace in the southern mountains, there can be an equally determined impulse to improve the lot of the poor

[12] Ibid.

[13] "Biltmore Estate & George Vanderbilt History." Biltmore Estate History & Vanderbilts. Accessed April 24, 2020. https://www.romanticasheville.com/biltmorececil.htm.

> mountain folks, an impulse that can sometimes create more resentment than collaboration.[14]

This tension is the soil that the legends discussed in this paper grow within, either nurtured or discarded, depending on one's place within this insider versus outsider culture. The beautiful architecture that lines Asheville's bustling streets gives visitors the sense of stepping back in time, making the legends seem more tangible and real than perhaps in other parts of the country.

The power of the legend lies in the way it cycles through its life as laid out by Ellis and the way it creates social meaning as described by Gordon and Thomas. The legend's life and ability to forge culture is a symbiotic relationship that is constantly born and reborn over the generations. To briefly address the question of belief seems essential to the formation of this argument. Some folklorists would argue that if someone tells a legend it implies that the narrator believes in the story, whether or not the entire audience agrees.[15] Yet, this criterion is easily muddled by the context of a legend's transmission, the relationship between the listener and the community the legend is being told within, and personal identity in comparison to the legend. Many folklorists rely on consultants to collect and understand legends, and while a folklorist may develop a lasting relationship with her consultant, she is ultimately still an outsider, so can she ever truly understand their deepest beliefs in the same way her consultant does?

Linda Dégh and Andrew Vazsonyi point out a series of roadblocks when relying solely on belief for the designation of legend in their piece *Legend and Belief*. They ask if belief is the primary criterion to define a legend, what happens to the legend if circumstances cause the consultant's opinions to change at a moment's notice? Do the cultural formations that the legend

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[14] Ball, Marilyn. *The Rise of Asheville: An Exceptional History of Community Building*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2015.

[15] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults*, 6.

ingrained in its host community cease to be of value? It is too simple to say the defining element of a legend is "does the narrator believe this or not?"[16] These questions cause folklorists to necessarily pivot away from belief as the bedrock for our arguments. However, it is also too simple to fully discount the value of belief on the legend's cycle. If there is no belief in the legend's story by any narrators or listeners across the history of the legend, can it have the power to push the social boundaries by which it is contained and create the new knowledge formation described by Gordon?

While belief is an unlikely criterion for legend definition, community engagement concerning a legend's possibility, not stark reality, is a helpful criterion by which to evaluate its impact. As Dégh and Vazsonyi argue, "the community would not produce a legend without the common ground to support them."[17] It is enough for someone in the community's history to have believed the legend, or in the ability for the legend's situation to arise at some point in time, to create the community culture. This type of belief is what creates the boundaries of society that the legend now, in various forms, pushes and reshapes. The act of telling and engagement is far more important than the absolute belief.[18]

Two such legends, in the form of ghost stories that are living multiple iterations at once through various groups, concern the lives, deaths, and subsequent hauntings of Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald and the Pink Lady of the Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina. Both women would have lived their lives in the early twentieth century, both women are tied to a place they can never seem to escape, and their stories are regularly recounted for personal and communal

[16] Dégh, Linda, and Andrew Vázsonyi. *Legend and Belief*. Austin (Tex.): University of Texas Press, 1976.

[17] Dégh, Linda, and Andrew Vázsonyi. *Legend and Belief,* 102.

[18] Ibid., 119.

purposes. What is it about two women who lived vastly different lives, one well documented and one almost entirely forgotten to history, that draws tellers in the twenty-first century to share stories about them again and again?

Zelda Fitzgerald, dancer, artist, and wife of the twentieth century writer F. Scott Fitzgerald, spent a portion of her adult life being treated for schizophrenia in a sanatorium called Highland Hospital in Asheville. The hospital, also known as Carroll's sanitorium, was run by world renowned psychologist Robert S. Carroll, noted for treating patients with cutting edge therapies--primarily what he called "working therapy," which was a combination of hard physical work through gardening, hiking, and arts--and more traditional, for the time period, approaches like electroshock and insulin treatments. At the time, Highland Hospital had two unique features that set it apart from other institutions: first, what was then considered cutting edge psychiatry, and second, yet perhaps more importantly, the ability to blur the line between retreat and sanitorium with a patient roster that boasted a long list of the rich and famous.[19] Highland Hospital was able to blur this line in large part because Dr. Carroll's wife, Grace Potter Carroll, was an internationally famous pianist who offered lessons, including to many up-and-coming performers like Nina Simone, and hosted concerts out of their home on the grounds of the hospital. This country club-like atmosphere allowed Highland to traverse the line of health retreat in appearance, yet sanitorium in practice, for many years.[20] The costly shell in which Highland wrapped itself would unknowingly become crucial to the formation of legends about Zelda Fitzgerald.

[19] "A Closer Look at the Highland Hospital Brochure." A Closer Look at the Highland Hospital Brochure | Duke Medical Center Archives. Accessed October 7, 2019. https://archives.mc.duke.edu/blog/closer-look-highland-hospital-brochure.

[20] Ibid.

While we do not know the specifics of Zelda's medical care or time at Highland because those files are still sealed, we do know that her personal life and her relationship with F. Scott were marked by raging highs and plummeting lows from the very beginning until the very end of their lives. Following F. Scott's death and a period of intense depression in 1948, Zelda checked herself into Highland for a round of insulin and electroshock therapy. It is often reported that as Zelda climbed the steps to Highland she turned to the nurse and said, "I feel this is the last time I will enter this building alive." History may never know if it was intuition or fate, but on March 10, 1948, a fire broke out that rapidly engulfed the building in which Zelda and other female patients were housed. The old wooden structure could not withstand the flames and eventually collapsed. Nine women, including Zelda Fitzgerald, had been tied to their beds on the top floor of the hospital after a day of treatments. Unable to escape, they perished in the fire.[21]

While no one has been able to tell me precisely when people began reporting the ghost of Zelda on the site of Highland Hospital, her spirit began to, and continues to make, regular appearances until it became a part of Asheville's cultural landscape. Although Zelda lived most of her life in other parts of the world, the gruesome nature of her death seems to be enough to tie her forever to this place. Zelda's spirit is often seen in two places on the old Highland grounds: sitting under a tree she was known to have sat and painted under in life, or walking into the remaining structure on the Highland property and disappearing up the stairwell and out of sight.[22] A plaque at the site reads, "In Memory of Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald 1900-1948 'I don't

[21] "Zelda Fitzgerald." F. Scott Fitzgerald Society. F. Scott Fitzgerald Society, October 30, 2018. https://fscottfitzgeraldsociety.org/about-us-2/biography-zelda-fitzgerald/.

[22] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." Gray Line Tours. Accessed April 22, 2020. https://graylineasheville.com/tours/ghost-tour/.

need anything except hope which I can't find by looking backwards or forwards, so I suppose the thing is to shut my eyes.'"[23]

The Pink Lady of the Grove Park Inn's legend in Asheville is as ever-present as Zelda's, yet she exists in obscurity, without so much as a name marking her place in history. Two competing stories of the Pink Lady dominate the landscape. The first narrative, told and carefully curated by the Grove Park Inn, states,

> In 1920 a young woman, who had not signed the hotel register, was pushed, jumped, or fell from the fifth floor of the Palm Court Balcony to the third floor. She lost her life, yet very few other guests heard a thing. Manager logs for the time stated that her body was rolled into a large carpet and removed from the property. Her identity is unknown. No death certificate or burial plot exists. However, her spirit remains with us and visits guests and employees alike, during the cooler months of the year. She is amiable and playful and presents herself mostly to women and children as a pink mist or orb of light inspiring her moniker, the Pink Lady. We receive reports of guest experiences monthly, even weekly in the winter. A television that changes stations without prompting; a quiet knock at the bathroom door; a room filled with pink mist during a renovation. Most often we receive reports of children asking their mother, 'Where did the nice lady go?' The Pink Lady still charms this hotel and our visitors long after her passing.[24]

A dueling yet equally present narrative of the Pink Lady is told by the guides for Asheville's Haunted History and Murder Mystery Trolley tour. In this version of the story the Pink Lady is a young, African American maid at the Grove Park Inn who enters into a relationship with Mr. Grove, the owner and namesake of the hotel. Upon finding out that she has become pregnant, he pushes her down two flights of stairs and then buries her body on the far reaches of the golf course to protect his name and fortune. Yet, despite the trauma, or perhaps because of it, the spirit of this woman still roams the grounds: caring for sick guests, entertaining children, playing

[23] Asheville, North Carolina, n.d.

[24] Akers, Julia and Jennifer Wagner. Interview with Megan Tice (email). January 21, 2020

harmless and yet intriguing tricks on the unsuspecting.[25] Yet, what would cause a ghost to behave this way, as both maternal and trickster?[26] Why would a woman who suffered injustice in life and is unnamed in death remain in the Grove Park Inn?

To explore the power of Zelda's and the Pink Lady's ghosts to create and define the culture around them, I worked with three distinct groups: Asheville ghost hunters, commercial businesses, and outsiders who, even though perhaps skeptical, are fascinated by what these women represent to Asheville as a space. By looking at each group individually, I seek to locate the legend narrative in the twenty-first century and begin to grasp the depths of its importance to Asheville's culture. Using Ellis and Gordon's frameworks, I will explain how each of these three groups uses the ghostly narrative to alter and shape the spaces around them in unique yet powerful ways. Each group is at a different point in the legend cycle--with the ghost hunters viewing these stories in their final iterations, the businesses seeing them as well formed, highly relevant stories, and the outsiders still finding the language to articulate the story for themselves--yet all three, as Gordon suggests, use the haunting as a key tool of understanding the spaces around them and the culture that defines that space for themselves and, ultimately, the greater Asheville community.

"Among the dead are Mrs. F. Scott Fitzgerald, 48, of Montgomery Alabama, widow of the author."
The Sun, Baltimore Maryland, March 12, 1948

"Don't you want to get better, Zelda? Cooperate. Admit how damaging it is for you to compete with me. Agree to give up dancing. They've told you all of this is necessary to your getting well...Scottie misses you something dreadfully. We want you home. There's no need for you to be

[25] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." 2019

[26] Tucker, Elizabeth. *Haunted Halls*, 2007.

a professional dancer, writer, or anything. Be a mother. Be a wife. I've made a good life for you, Zelda; stop rejecting it."
Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald by Theresa Anne Fowler

The methodology I employ for this piece involves a combination of field work, literary study, and archival research. While conducting my field work, I leaned into many facets of the tensions involved in ethnography. I connected with many remarkable people over the course of this project and was able to conduct interviews with four that, ultimately if this became a larger project, could all have their own work dedicated exclusively to them: Pepper Paris of the Asheville Paranormal Society, Julia Akers and Jennifer Wagner of the Grove Park Inn, and Alicia Wilson, the owner of the Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast in historic Montford.

My consultants shifted the scope of my project drastically from its original iterations--challenging all my assumptions about both Zelda and the Pink Lady. During my fieldwork with all of these individuals, one of the most important and guiding pieces in my work was Glenn Hinson's "Stepping Around Experience and the Supernatural." While this work is mostly about religious encounters, it spoke strongly to the importance of introspectively challenging both my own views on the supernatural and how I write about, or talk about, those experiences. Hinson states, "Yet these convoluted mirrorings nonetheless come to stand for experience in the ethnographic text; they come to represent the lived realities of our consultants. The experience of the individual, meanwhile, disappears in the distortion."[27] This caused me to truly lean into the uncomfortable nature of my work and to resist the urge to explain away my consultants' beliefs, and instead listen as if there was no room for doubt. Hinson's work impressed upon me the importance of respectful inquiry and understanding that if an experience shaped my consultant's

[27] Hinson, Glenn. *Fire in My Bones: Transcendence and the Holy Spirit in African American Gospel*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999. Accessed April 1, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central. Pg. 327

life and worldview, it was worthy of respect whether they believed or were skeptical of the stories they were sharing with me.

The fieldwork for this work also involved on site visits to each of the locations that are represented therein. In June 2019 I took my grandmother, a lifelong Asheville resident, on the Murder Mysteries and Haunted Histories Trolley Tour. While recording was strictly prohibited on the tour, I have represented all the notes and stories told by the tour drivers to the best of my memory. I also had lunch at the Grove Park Inn and toured the premises a few times over the course of the year. An important aspect of the Pink Lady is that she is most active in the winter months at the hotel. The Inn maintains, "We receive inquiries and interest year-round, but perhaps more colorful reports of encounters in the winter."[28] While the Grove Park Inn does not promote the Pink Lady in one season more than in others, she certainly has a stronger appeal in the winter. I took a few winter visits to the Inn but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was unable to travel as much as I hoped.

To get closer to the Highland Hospital site and to understand the culture in the surrounding Historic Montford neighborhood, my husband and I spent the night at The Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast, purported to be haunted itself, which is less than a mile from the Highland Hospital site and Zillicoa Ave. While there we walked down to the hospital site, now a private complex, multiple times at different times of day and night to see what we experienced. The experiential aspect of this work became more and more important as my research progressed. While I did not personally encounter either of the spirits discussed at length in this paper, understanding the grounds they walk and the journeys those who seek them take was crucial to this thesis.

[28] Akers, 2020.

For my archival work I dove into historical accounts of the time, mainly through newspapers. Many newspapers around the country including *The Los Angeles Times, The Baltimore Sun, The Washington Post,* and *The New York Times* carried accounts of the fire at Highland Hospital. However, it was difficult to find follow up information about investigations into the blaze and information on any of the other women who perished besides Zelda. Some of these papers had brief mentions of the fire with the details of when it started, how long it lasted, and a death toll. Others went into more detail and offered interesting perspectives on mental health care and life at Highland in the early twentieth century. *The Washington Post* reported, "... hospital windows were chained to keep patients from escaping. Several who got out were rounded up by townspeople."[29] While *The Baltimore Sun* reported, "It was the third fire at the hospital in less than a year. Fire Chief J.C. Fitzgerald said, one ignited a mattress and the other started from soaked rags under the doorway."[30] These types of accounts helped me to understand the attitudes and cultural climate surrounding institutionalization in the 1940s more vividly. While newspapers were very helpful regarding Zelda, I could find nothing regarding the Pink Lady's life in any account, no accounts of a missing woman at the Grove Park Inn and no reports of a missing loved one who vacationed in Asheville. She is entirely silent to the newspapers of the day, making her story much harder to conceptualize and her life impossible to understand unless new information appears.

Because of the literary nature of Zelda, my literary research proved exceptionally important in conceptualizing this project. In my preliminary research I read *Save Me the Waltz* by Zelda, in order to understand the way her mind worked and the value she held as an artist. In

[29] "Author's Widow, 8 Dead in Asylum Fire." *The Washington Post*, March 12, 1948.

[30] "9 Women Die in Asheville Hospital Fire: Other Patients of Mental Institution Are Led to Safety." *Baltimore Sun*, March 12, 1948.

many ways scholars believe this work to be autobiographical, so reading it helped me to understand her feelings about life, F. Scott, her travels, and her own work. I also wanted to understand the dynamic between F. Scott and Zelda, which led me to read *The Beautiful and the Damned, The Great Gatsby,* and *Tender is the Night.* While these are works of fiction, F. Scott constantly referred to Zelda as his muse for writing and dedicated many of these books to her. Additionally many scholars, like Zelda biographer Nancy Millford, believe that many of F. Scott's ideas and indeed whole sentences were pulled from Zelda's journal and letters, thus helping me to dive a little deeper into their minds. While it was not possible for me to meet these two people, I feel that a glimpse into their life works guided me as I asked questions and sought to understand why a spirit would remain so tightly bound to a space it never truly called "home." In order to understand more about Zelda and F. Scott as they presented themselves to each other, I read *Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda*, a collection of their letters compiled by their granddaughter, as well as *Zelda: A Biography* by Nancy Millford. I wanted a firm grasp on Zelda as a person so I could begin to articulate the power of Zelda as a ghost in this paper. While I did not even come close to capturing the exuberance and genius of her as a woman, I tried to do her justice.

While I do not address the issue in this paper, it is important to note that many scholars and artists find Zelda and F. Scott's work to be important and foundational to the American Canon even a century later. Fictitious renderings of their lives at different stages abound, including *Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald* by Theresa Anne Fowler and *Guests on Earth* by Lee Smith, both of which I read to understand how a twenty-first century audience engages with artists of the past. Many parties with a "Great Gatsby" theme can be attended throughout the year, including one at the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC that was scheduled to happen in Spring 2020. While they do not immediately factor into the scope of this work, I think it is

important to note how pervasive both Zelda and F. Scott remain even into the twenty-first century and the ways that their lives and works continue to shape a generation of artists.

The academic framework for this piece is a combination of many important works in the Folkloristic and Sociologist fields regarding legend and narrative. Ellis's *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults* representation of the legend cycle is crucial to the formation of this paper. Using his framework I explore the idea that legends could have multiple cycles for multiple in and out groups over the course of the legend's life. A legend is far from a stagnant, monolithic entity but instead a living document that ebbs and flows throughout the presented cycles as the stories reach, and are adapted by, new groups. I combined Ellis's legend cycle framework with Jeannie Banks Thomas and Diane Goldstein's work in *Haunting Experiences: Ghosts in Contemporary Folklore* to look at why these legend cycles matter in various contexts and how the persistence of such narratives continues to shape our cultural understanding of various phenomena and the ways that these phenomena shape individual and group identity formation. I drew an overarching framework for this paper from Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination.* Gordon pushes us not only to observe the haunting as it exists in time and space, but also to question why a haunting is occurring and what sociological phenomena it is redirecting and questioning. Gordon argues that hauntings are just as important to the human experience as living experiences like marriage, ritual, and friendship, and that through these hauntings we can begin to understand and question the societal frameworks that perpetuate injustice. Gordon states, "If we want to study social life well...we must learn to identify hauntings and reckon with ghosts, we must learn how to make contact with that which is without a doubt painful, difficult, and unsettling."[31] This work circles around two ghostly beings'

[31] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 23.

attempting to make themselves more tangible in the study of Asheville and its culture. These women are impossible to capture from a single angle, and even in the robust exploration of them through fiction, biographies, fieldwork, archive, and interviews, I am able to capture only a fleeting glimpse of each of them and the cultural importance they bear to both individual people and the culture of Asheville as a whole.

"Meanwhile, I could not keep myself from staring at the Fitzgeralds, though I knew it was rude to stare. I also knew instinctively that they would never notice me anyway, just a skinny girl in whom they could have no possible interest, lost in a sea of people. I was beneath their notice. Mrs. Fitzgerald wore a purplish coat and grey cloth hat. She looked dull and almost ugly. He wore a tweed jacket and a white shirt and a red bowtie, incongruously jaunty. Neither one of them ever spoke. They sat like dolls in a window staring out upon the world beyond them, a world they no longer owned. She was smoking. Their waiter came with beer after beer."
Lee Smith, *Guests on Earth*

"There is a strange, but gentle spirit residing within the gray, granite walls of Asheville's historic Grove Park Inn. Known simply as the "Pink Lady", she has been seen, felt, and experienced by hotel employees and guests for nearly a century."
Pink Lady Handout from the Omni Grove Park Inn

In Asheville, somewhere between insider and outsider, lies the business sector that propagates, and profits off of, the ghostly narratives of Zelda and the Pink Lady. The Grove Park Inn and the Haunted History and Murder Mysteries Trolley Tour are particularly active in this regard. These two businesses not only profit from the ghostly narratives surrounding these two women, but have used them as a cornerstone to their business models. The two businesses, however, offer the stories with a markedly divergent tone. The Grove Park Inn has carefully curated the Pink Lady's story to make her a charming, whimsical addition to a guest's stay at the hotel, while the Murder Mysteries and Haunted Histories tour seeks to expose the "darker" sides

of Asheville, playing up the gruesome and scary. Both groups push the legend among visitors as a gateway to the insider culture of Asheville, past and present.

Even though these businesses do profit from these narratives, to dismiss these versions as unimportant or inauthentic in their own legend cycle would be a mistake. In her essay "The Commodification of Belief," Diane Goldstein argues that commodified culture is as central to cultural formation as its more obscure counterparts. She states, "But, while the commodification of culture certainly has a transformational effect on the tradition it celebrates, the assertion that the results of the commodifying process are necessarily trivializing is perhaps a bit too dismissive...A closer look at the merchandising of haunted real estate and ghost tourism suggests that to the contrary, commodified culture is multifaceted, complex, and as likely to be a site of social meaning as any other." [32] Becoming a space of both profit and social meaning creation is what uniquely situates these two businesses between the in-groups and out-groups. While they are a part of the Asheville community and culture, they are also a piece of its economy, introducing more complicated questions to its legend cycle, such as what point does the legend cease to be valued by the community and only appreciated by guests? The businesses have become a haven for outsiders to learn about a new place and enter the legend cycle. This type of gatekeeper role means that these businesses carefully curate which aspects of Asheville's legend culture should be shared with those who do not consider Asheville home.

When I contacted Akers and Wagner of the Grove Park Inn's marketing and publicity team to find out more about the Pink Lady and her relevance to the Inn as an institution, they sent me a handout commissioned by the hotel to tell guests about the Pink Lady. The handout reads, "For many years, all that was known about the Pink Lady was a swirl of stories dating

[32] Goldstein, Grider, and Thomas, 2007.

back to the earliest recollections of the Grove Park Inn employees--stories about a young lady in a flowing pink dress that fell to her death under mysterious circumstances in the Palm Court atrium around 1920. Are these mere rumors, tales and lore weaving through the Inn's rich history?"[33] The language deployed by the Inn removes the Pink Lady from her untimely death at the Grove Park Inn and transforms her instead to a transcendent friendly spirit that is part of both the past and the present of the Inn's story. The Pink Lady does the important work of tying the past to the present and the part, the Inn, to the whole, Asheville.

The Inn praises the warmth of the Pink Lady's presence while mystifying the horrific circumstances surrounding her death. Her very name, assigned by the Inn based on the pink aura that indicates her presence, is a form of historical violence to her true untimely death, leaving her nameless and charming. Other scholars, such as Ronald Finucane, have noted the use of color to mark a ghost's presence as a way to indicate an untold, hidden history, similar to the way the Pink Lady's aura sends a message about her unsettled past.[34] Regardless of how she died, her race, or the circumstances surrounding her death, the Pink Lady fell to her death, and since then history has attempted to smother her. A death at a luxury hotel and resort in the 1920s should have been reported to the police, yet I was unable to find anything that could answer any questions about her in the *Asheville Citizen* or the *Asheville Times* (later merged into one paper). Furthermore, the Inn management themselves argue they have no indication of who she is or how she came to be there. The Grove Park Inn states that their version of the story is based on accounts from an unknown manager log, "In 1920 a young woman, who had not signed the hotel register, was pushed, jumped, or fell from the fifth floor of the Palm Court Balcony to the third

[33] "The Mystery of the Pink Lady," (handout received from Julia Akers, Asheville, North Carolina, Jan 21, 2020).

[34] Finucane, Ronald C. *Ghosts: Appearances of the Dead & Cultural Transformation.* Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1984.

floor. She lost her life yet very few other guests heard a thing. Manager Logs for the time stated that her body was rolled into a large carpet and removed from property. Her identity is unknown. No death certificate or burial plot exists."[35] Yet, why would a manager record a murder, or at the very least cover up a dreadful accident, and then record it in their daily log? Under what circumstances could an unaccompanied woman stay at a luxury resort, never return, and never be reported? The very Inn that keeps a ledger and pictures of every famous person who has ever been there cannot find the name of a young woman who died, and continues to haunt, the grounds. The Inn has carefully scripted the story of the Pink Lady so as to control what guests hear about her. During a visit to the Grove Park Inn I asked a waiter, a concierge, a gift shop employee, and a front desk worker about the Pink Lady, and their answers were so strikingly similar it was almost jarring. The power structure at play in this luxury business wants the Pink Lady's presence, and the financial value she adds to the location, yet controls every aspect of who she is, how she came to be, and what purpose she serves.

The Grove Park Inn's controlled yet imprecise account of the Pink Lady is particularly striking given the Inn's eagerness to offer detailed accounts of many other influential people who have visited, whether to stay or simply to eat and rest for an afternoon. This list includes the wealthiest portion of America's population like the Rockefellers, politicians across centuries from William Jennings Bryan to the Obamas, scientists like Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, and artists like the Fitzgeralds.[36] The Grove Park Inn heralds their connection to F. Scott and, to an extent, Zelda, while distancing themselves from the more complicated aspects of their lives and deaths. There are smiling pictures of the Fitzgerald family in the gallery hallway, and the Inn

[35] Akers, 2020.

[36] hotelnews. "Hotel History: The Grove Park Inn (1913) & The Biltmore Estate." Hotel Industry News by Hotel News Resource. Accessed April 22, 2020. https://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article86424.html.

offers expensive weekend retreats honoring F. Scott's life and time at the Grove Park Inn (complete with a gin tasting and short story competition). The Inn boasts in a video to C-Span in 2018 that they are directly connected to the resurgence of F. Scott Fitzgerald's fame. "The beginning of when he began to come back...the time Fitzgerald, some people say, had a literary comeback and he started actually getting published again. We do not know for sure if those were the essays he was writing here, but we do know he was actively writing and starting the essay process here at the Grove Park Inn (6:20)."[37] These things occur while they simultaneously gloss over Zelda's, at best coerced, admittance to Highland just down the street or the truth about F. Scott's dangerous alcoholism.

F. Scott stayed at the Grove Park Inn twice during his life, in 1935 and again in 1936. In 1935 F. Scott came to "cure himself of his Gin addiction" and try to begin writing again.[38] However, he created so many problems he was told he could not return to the hotel unsupervised. So when he returned in 1936, in order to admit Zelda to Highland Hospital, he brought a nurse and his secretary with him to supervise his visit over the course of the summer. In the same interview with C-span, a representative of the Grove Park Inn concludes, "We truly believe that the Grove Park Inn offered F. Scott Fitzgerald exactly what he was looking for, a place to rediscover himself." (6:44)[39] The Grove Park Inn clings to this and other legacies of the rich and famous that have graced their halls over the years as a piece of their own identity formation and, perhaps even deeper, their central belonging in Asheville's far reaching narrative, while ignoring

[37] Ibid.

[38] "F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Grove Park Inn." Accessed April 22, 2020. https://www.c-span.org/video/?443287-1/f-scott-fitzgerald-grove-park-inn.

[39] "F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Grove Park Inn.", 2018.

the nameless history represented by the Pink Lady, and even Zelda's death and haunting less than three miles down the road.

In a much less nostalgic tone and with the purpose to reveal a darker side of Asheville, the Haunted History and Murder Mystery Trolley tour tells a very different set of tales every day of their season.[40] The website states, "Sit back if you dare as we illuminate Asheville's darkest history with astonishing stories of spirits & spies, ghosts & goblins, hauntings & hoodlums and mountain-made murder & mayhem. Hear stories of The Legendary PINK LADY at the Grove Park Inn...ARSON at hospital that claimed Zelda Fitzgerald."[41] The trolley tour not only repeats the story to locals, but actively advertises these two legends as reasons to visit the area. They use keywords to play on the emotions of visitors to the area and make them feel like they are a deeper part of the Asheville community. The use of "legendary" at the Grove Park Inn gives those visiting a sense of insider identity, of understanding something that is formative to Asheville's identity. "ARSON" being capitalized gives an absolute statement where, officially, there is none.

The trolley tour in Asheville picks up and drops off riders at Pack's Tavern, a new restaurant in an old and historically significant building, and conveys them up and down the streets to tell them of the people who lived there in the past and those who still haunt it now. The stories range from quirky and charming, like the artist who could not bear to part with his masterpiece at the Basilica of St. Lawrence in Downtown Asheville, to heartbreaking, like the untimely death of Thomas Wolfe's brother Benjamin due to the Spanish flu, to criminal, like the gruesome murder of a young girl at the Battery Park Hotel. Yet, even with such a wide range of

[40] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." 2019.

[41] Ibid.

stories to tell and centuries of tales to cover, the tour spends the most time highlighting two stories: Zelda and the Pink Lady. As the trolley travels through the historic Montford neighborhood, quickly approaching the Highland Hospital site, the driver begins to weave a tale of jazz age love with Zelda and F. Scott. As the hospital comes into view the story shifts to Zelda's time at Highland, the types of treatments she received, and, finally, the details of the fire that took her life. Our driver told the story with great passion and at the end, in an almost whisper, told us that nothing was more eerie than when all the screaming of the nine women trapped on the top floor finally stopped.[42] This story is unique because the narrative is told in a way that creates a respect for the Hospital and, more importantly, Dr. Carroll and the work he was doing at the sanitorium, while painting the patients as dangerous, but ultimately passive, figures in the story. The fire, while definitely a tragedy, is not the only tragedy that could be told about Highland, yet it is the only one that is even mentioned.

When our trolley driver told us about Zelda's ghost, the story changed tone drastically to a more playful one. The guide mentions that Zelda's spirit is often seen painting under a tree she liked to sit under in life or walking across the field and going up the stairs into the last remaining structure, which at the time of her life would have been the men's dormitory. Here, the guide turned and asked "what could a woman like Zelda be doing disappearing into the men's dormitory?" and then gave us, the audience, a wink.[43] Zelda has become a staple in Asheville's identity even though she and F. Scott spent relatively little time here. Yet, in this legend she has become a stereotype of herself, the flapper, the flirt, the unstable, the "want-to-be artist" and a

[42] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." 2019.

[43] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." 2019.

hallmark of the city, instead of acknowledging the multitude of places she called home or the multifaceted and talented woman she was in life.

The trolley continues meandering through the historic homes and stately gardens up the winding mountain until the Grove Park Inn comes into full view. The Grove Park Inn's architecture and sheer magnitude give it an imposing aura. The trolley stops in front of the wide front doors with the classic cars parked right beside it, and the guide begins her legend. Our driver told us about a lady who checked into the hotel in the 1920s in a flowing pink gown and then vanished, only to reappear as a ghost shortly thereafter with the same pink aura. The trolley's account of this woman's life is incredibly different from the Grove Park Inn's account. While both agree that an unaccounted-for-woman died on the grounds, the trolley tour asserts that this woman was a young, African American maid who was having an affair with E.W. Grove, the founder and owner of the Grove Park Inn. When she became pregnant she approached Mr. Grove's family who immediately began to pay her hush money in order to not ruin their family's reputation. However, she eventually told him she was going to tell their secret unless he married her. In a rage he pushed her over the fifth-floor balcony in the palm court where she landed on the fourth floor and, for good measure, he dumped her once more to the third to make sure she was dead. In the trolley driver's legend, Mr. Grove went on to bury the body in the back corners of the grounds, land that was not cultivated and would not be for many years. The legend continues that sometime around the turn of the twenty first century, as the golf course expanded, the grounds crew dug up the body of a woman in a pink dress who had been dead for over a century. While the Grove family could never confirm her identity, they did admit that there were strange payouts in their financial records that inexplicably stopped in 1920.[44] The only other

[44] "Ghost, History & Mystery Tours - Gray Line Asheville." 2019.

evidence I ever heard to corroborate a story like this was an encounter I had with some images at the Inn many years ago. Sometime in the mid-2000s, the Inn mounted a large wall display about the Pink Lady, including letters recounting guests' encounters with her and drawings made by children who had seen her there. In many of the drawings, the children had colored in the face and hands of their image of the Pink Lady, suggesting that they saw her as African American. Yet, when asked about these images during my research, representatives of the Inn did not recall the display and were sure they had no evidence of it. When did the story of the Pink Lady change to become the official narrative it is today, and how has the forgotten story shaped the parameters of the existing story?

This version of the story introduces many interesting questions of agency and how history remembers, or forgets, moments in time. Here we see Gordon's theory of transformative recognition at work in the narrative and haunting of the Pink Lady. Her presence, or the stories around her presence, push the twenty-first century audience to grapple with questions of the legacy of the institution with which she is connected. The haunting unsettles the narrative of nostalgia and requires us, in the legend's wake, to confront troubling questions about race, class, and gender in early twentieth-century Asheville. If the Pink Lady was an African American maid, murdered by a wealthy man after a complicated, at best, relationship, why is her spirit now a caring and gentle caregiver of other well-to-do guests at the Inn? Has her narrative not just relegated her to a mammy stereotype without having to question the circumstances of the wealthy family who purportedly murdered her?

Even in the stark differences in their stories, the Grove Park Inn and the Trolley ride in Asheville work similarly to find the tellable narrative in untellable moments in history. In his book Ellis argues "But, this is the task and duty of the legend process-to reduce private

experience to 'tellable' form." [45] Even in the legend cycle there are boundaries of tellable and untellable stories, even as legends push us to change our understanding of society. In her article "'It's Really Hard to Tell the True Story of Tobacco': Stigma, Tellability, and Reflexible Scholarship," Ann K. Ferrell argues that all stories are either tellable, able to be digested by the greater population, or untellable, so against the public's beliefs or ideas they cannot be digested, or processed, through the mainstream way of understanding.[46] Zelda and the Pink Lady create a transitory middle ground, through these businesses, as tellable untellable narratives.

Highland Hospital and Zelda's death is one of these tellable untellable narratives. While the fire was incredibly tragic, it plays into modern sensibilities about mental health care in the early twentieth century, and even some prevalent misconceptions about mental health today. The narrative about the fire, especially the narrative in which it was started by a former patient turned disgruntled nurse that is most prominently spread by blogs and the trolley ride, fits within society's current understanding of how these kinds of tragedies can happen even in the nicest of neighborhoods. Though the deaths are gruesome, there is almost a tone of "but they were crazy women" that hangs around the story. This understanding was first reflected in the newspapers of the time. The *Washington Post's* article on March 12, 1948, about the Highland Hospital fire reads, "The United Press said firemen were hampered in their rescue work because the hospital windows were chained to keep patients from escaping. *Several who got out were rounded up by townspeople"* (emphasis mine).[47] This type of language leads one to think of cattle or animal work instead of helping frightened women find their way to safety during a terrible tragedy. The

[45]Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults*, 150.

[46] Ferrell, Ann K. "'It's Really Hard to Tell the True Story of Tobacco': Stigma, Tellability, and Reflexive Scholarship." *Journal of Folklore Research* 49, no. 2 (2012): 127–52. https://doi.org/10.2979/jfolkrese.49.2.127.

[47]"Author's widow, 8 dead in Asylum Fire," 1948.

Baltimore Sun reported that "Wailing of some of the 29 women echoed the grounds."[48] Again, as if the women were hysterical, relating to their "nervous disorder," instead of accounting for the fact that some of them had just escaped death in the hospital while others were trapped inside. The tellable narrative is that the fire happened, yet the women, because of their mental state, almost overreacted to the tragedy.

The appearance of Zelda's ghost continues to push the tellable narrative deeper into its untellable parts so that a different population can articulate a shared experience. Zelda's spirit creates a multiple new sphere of tellability for women who have been oppressed and silenced and for those who are trying to find ways to articulate the stories of their own mental health. Her ghost opens an avenue to talk about the unjust ways we treat the mentally ill, yet stops short of indicting the standards that propped up the type of care she received. Furthermore, the appearance of her spirit always drawing is told as a tellable narrative of a docile woman. Yet, it does not push the question of why a spirit would feel so connected to her work in death? It does not ask why we still refer to her as the wife of F. Scott Fitzgerald instead of the artist, the painter, the dancer, or the writer.

The fire, and the circumstances surrounding it, are a tellable tragedy that can be assimilated into existing beliefs, yet the other narratives that could be told about Highland regarding abuse, unjust imprisonment, and the ways that wealthy individuals in the past and present can use their wealth to cover up unjust behavior are currently untellable and thus left out of existing legend cycles. One of the main stories that the fire has left in the ashes of history is that of the Cook Vs. Highland Hospital court case in 1915. In 1915, a young woman sued Carroll and Highland Hospital for wrongful imprisonment, neglect, and abuse. She willingly admitted

[48] "9 women die in Asheville Hospital Fire: other patients of mental institution are led to safety," 1948.

herself to Highland to calm her nerves prior to her wedding, but subsequently alleged that she had done so only because Carroll lured her to the hospital under false pretenses. While she was there she was physically abused and later neglected, being left in isolation for extended periods in a cell-like room. To justify his behavior when she would not submit to his authority as a clinician and demanded to be discharged, Carroll diagnosed her as hysterical. The court case states, "There was a conflict of evidence as to the treatment that the plaintiff received, but there is no controversy that the plaintiff was detained in the defendant's hospital against her will; confined for thirty-two days; that she was confined a considerable part of the time in a locked and barred cell; that she was denied all communication with her friends and subjected to having her hair shampooed and to massage of delicate portions of her body and to hypodermic injections daily against her will."[49] Her family came to her defense, stating they were denied the right to see her and that she was a sensible woman who was just seeking a health retreat and not in need of any type of institutional care.

In a rare turn of events, the plaintiff won her case, and Carroll was convicted of wrongful imprisonment and abuse. In order for Highland to stay open, Carroll transferred ownership to Duke University, which covered up the story and stated that new oversight and leadership was instituted, while in practice Carroll remained in charge of the grounds. Because of the wealth of the Carrolls and many of the patients at Highland, it is hard for Asheville to assimilate the darker parts of this narrative into their nostalgic, jazz age vision of the location. Therefore, the story that history remembers is of a woman setting a fire and not a man abusing his patients, because that is what people can assimilate into their existing worldview and that is what they expect to encounter when they visit a beautiful retreat like Asheville. The untellable narrative, which

[49] *Cook v. Hospital*, 84 S.E. 352, (N.C. 1915).

directs every part of the tellable story, has been buried by history and assuaged by the ghost. Yet, couldn't the ghost just as likely be there to demand the story be properly told than just out of anger for an untimely death? While we only have one court case to pull back the veil of the inner workings at Highland Hospital, one can see that even by twentieth century standards, Carroll crossed the line from treatment into abuse. The fire was a tragedy, but is it the tragedy for which the ghosts are demanding reconciliation?

In parallel form, the Pink Lady has become a tellable narrative at the Grove Park Inn in spite of the secrecy and questions surrounding her death. In her work, *Haunted Halls*, folklorist Elizabeth Tucker explains that ghostly maternal figures can be found in college dorms around the country. These ghostly figures offer a sense of calm, as protector and caregiver for homesick students, and are often viewed as motherly and endearing spirits.[50] Similarly to the way these spirits offer comfort to students who are far from home, the Pink Lady offers a sense of comfort and belonging to those who encounter her at the Inn. However, there is a stark contrast between the logically consistent house ghosts in Tucker's work and the Pink Lady. Why would a woman murdered and nameless to history take on this maternal, caregiver role for all time? The Pink Lady's narrative begins to reach the limits of tellability when we ask questions such as how a hotel that can find a handwritten receipt from one hundred years ago cannot confirm or locate the death of a woman from the same period? Was the Pink Lady a guest or a worker at the Grove Park Inn, and does that change the tragedy of her death? If she was not an African American maid, then why does her ghost story push her into that role? Since she was either murdered or committed suicide, would she not more reasonably want to exact revenge or offer a warning? Her story becomes more and more untellable as she pushes against the twenty-first century

[50] Tucker, *Haunted Halls*, 44.

listener's understanding of race, class, and gender and when she steps outside of the twentieth century and makes contemporary listeners question the things that happen now.

Ochs and Capps take the idea of tellability a step further, arguing that tellability is based on the teller's motives, and the listener's ability to synthesize that information into digestible, usable information. They argue,

> The dimension of tellability acknowledges that narratives of personal experience present reportable events...More or less tellable narratives may be related to the teller's goals rather than his or her rhetorical skills and social sensibilities. In particular, while certain tellers appear to recount a sequence of unusual events primarily for an interlocutor's interest, other tellers do so primarily to gain insight into events, recruiting their interlocutors to gain perspective.[51]

Even in their untellable tellable form, these legends in the hands of these companies do begin the process to which both Ochs and Capps and Ellis refer, reducing the private experience to something that is tellable, and universal.[52] They remove an experience with the supernatural out of a niche, inexpressible condition and into a central point of Asheville's identity. No one at the Grove Park Inn, owned by the Omni Group, one of the most profitable luxury hotel and resort groups in the world, would scoff at a person who told them they experienced something in room 545, just like no one on Zillicoa Street is confused to find people wandering the park waiting to experience something on the street. Even if you don't truly belong to the in-group of Asheville, these businesses are creating a different in-group that brings in both Asheville natives and outsiders.

The Inn has remained in continuous operation since Grove first opened it. George Gershwin, Harry Houdini, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and even President Obama have all stayed at the

[51]Ochs, Elinor, and Lisa Capps. *Living Narrative: Creating Lives in Everyday Storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

[52] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults.*

Grove Park Inn. Known for its elegance and comfort, the Grove Park hosts several world-class restaurants and a superior spa on site. It's a beautiful, relaxing, romantic inn, that you would never want to leave. And, according to legend, one guest never did leave.
The Pink Lady of the Grove Park Inn from North Carolina Ghosts: Stories, Legends, Folklore

In an exploration of the cultural impact Zelda and the Pink Lady have had on Asheville as a destination, the group that I would define as the innermost circle, the defined "in-group," would be the Asheville Paranormal Society. The Asheville Paranormal Society is composed of individuals dedicated to seeking out the spirits for a wide array of reasons. These individuals believe in the reality of all kinds of spirits and the world they inhabit. Pepper Paris, member of the Asheville Paranormal Society and self-proclaimed history nerd and believer, emphasized the importance of Asheville's spirits in our interview and described the ways they alter the world around her daily. Yet, the crucial piece to understanding the paranormal side of Asheville comes not from the ghosts themselves, but from a very corporal strand in the cultural fabric: the deep divide between the wealthy outsiders who came to the area across the centuries, and still come now for the beauty of the mountains, and the lower socioeconomic class of locals that have been pushed out of the story of their own town. Paris describes this divide in this way,

> We always had two or three newspapers going on, even at the turn of the century in 1890. There was the Citizen and the Times...The Citizen was the morning paper and it was the wealthy man's newspaper, and it did not carry as much. I mean it carried some local news, the local news they wanted to hear, but it was your stock market report, it was picked up by API. And that was the vision, that newspaper projected the vision of the world that the wealthy people that were here wanted to project on Asheville. Because we were about tourism from the day that the trains got here. Come on to our health resort. That is where it all began with our influx of wealthy people, because they were the only ones who could get on the trains and come here. Us locals didn't get on the train and go nowhere, we stayed here and ended up working for them, and that is just kind of how our whole culture here started.[53]

[53] Paris, 2020 (9:44).

This powerful idea, even though mentioned only once, was the crux of every story she told.

Paris described the ways that Asheville moved from a small town to thriving city when the trains opened up the ability for others to come here and capitalize on the health and resort industries. Wealthy outsiders, such as the Vanderbilts who built the Biltmore estate, E.W. Grove of the Grove Park Inn, and the patients at Highland Hospital, flocked to the area, laying claim to large pieces of land with breathtaking views and crisp mountain air, while traditionally poorer mountain natives were exiled to the edges of society and used as employees and low wage workers to create the culture the outsiders wanted to see exist.[54] With this framework in mind, it seems natural that the ghost stories Paris, and those she most closely associated with in the Paranormal Society, care most deeply about are the stories of those who lived, worked, and died in Asheville. These stories have never been recorded for history to reconcile, while the other stories, like Zelda and the Pink Lady, wealthy outsiders in her view, mattered less to Paris's worldview. This aligns with Gordon's argument, "The work and power in the story lie in giving all the reasons why all the reasons are never quite enough. Why they cannot close the breach between two interrelated but distinct affairs, why haunting rather than history captures the constellations of connections that charge any 'time of the now' with the debts of the past and the expense of the present."[55] In Paris's in-group, the ghosts not mentioned on the trolley rides and not known by history are crucial in helping to write the history never written and making connections across the centuries.

While I am an Asheville native, I have not lived in the city for many years, and so my understanding of which stories mattered to its culture were vastly different than my consultant's,

[54] Paris, 2020.

[55] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 142.

who had lived in Asheville her whole life. I had heard various ghost stories about the region in childhood. When I rediscovered them in adulthood it was through ghost tours and legend trips, never from a plugged-in perspective to the paranormal world. Paris, an insider in both the paranormal world and daily society of Asheville, had a different gauge on what narratives mattered and why. The idea of insider versus outsider expressed by Paris can also be found in Ellis's book *Aliens, Ghosts and Cults* when he discusses the ideas of "ficts" or stories told as true but used to scare outsiders away.[56] I would argue that the businesses discussed previously treat the stories of Zelda and the Pink Lady as anti-ficts, using them to pull outsiders in while ignoring the true voices of those who have lived and died in the mountains. Paris did not seem interested in circling around to the stories of the Pink Lady or Zelda. In fact, to Paris, these stories had reached what Ellis refers to as the end of their "legend life."

For Paris and others in her in-group, Zelda and the Pink Lady seem to be somewhere between the fourth and fifth stages of the cycle, somewhere between common place and obsolete, yet I never found a direct answer for why, or how, they had reached this stage. During our lunch conversation Paris asked me to tell her what I was writing about and why, so I briefly outlined my fascination with the Pink Lady and Zelda, pointing to the ways these stories had shaped parts of both my childhood and adulthood and my interest in Asheville's rapid growth as a premiere destination. She listened respectfully, even agreeing at parts of the power of ghosts to answer unasked questions of history. Yet, when I asked her to tell me the legends of Zelda and the Pink Lady in her own words, she always pivoted back to local ghosts with untold stories, namely the ghost of the Battery Park hotel or those down Haywood Street.

[56] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults*, 6.

Eventually the conversations came back around to Zelda and F. Scott, so I asked again if she could tell me about Zelda in her own words. Perhaps because she knew I had familiarity with the story, or perhaps because she did not value it as truly important to her, she offered an overview of the legend instead of a detailed account. However, even in this narrative she pivoted away from the ghost and relied heavily on the inaccuracy of the historical accounts surrounding the fire and the problems that presents for both historians and ghost hunters alike. Paris described the way the *Asheville Citizen*, the paper for the wealthier business sector of society, made it sound like Willa Mae, the nurse who allegedly set the fire to the building, was a criminal and the definite perpetrator of the crime, an open and shut tragedy. On the other hand, the *Asheville Times*, the working man's paper that came out in the evenings, described the way Willa Mae was being framed, and how the fire was being used to erase a multitude of sins including the sexual charges and accusations of neglect against Dr. Carroll.[57] If anything, Paris viewed the story as a historical cover up, with the wealthy outsiders framing the poor locals for their indiscretion.

Instead, the ghosts Paris spent most of our time expounding upon were those wayward spirits who had died by suicide by jumping from the top of the Asheville City Building. We talked about these stories, looked at images she had captured around the area, and talked about sources and newspapers and even whose stories get told and why, but we never really talked about Zelda and the Pink Lady. In fact, she pushed back against the legend surrounding Zelda at one point asking, "Why does it have to be Zelda? Nine women lost their lives in a gruesome way that night, yet she is the only reported ghost. How do they know it is her?"[58]

[57] Paris, 2020.

[58] Ibid.

This is where defining in-groups becomes murky, because while it seems to Paris, and perhaps many of her counterparts in the paranormal society, that Zelda and the Pink Lady do not help define the culture of Asheville, other groups that could be considered “in” seem to feel that these two women are very relevant to their personal or group identity. Even other groups outside of the business sector join in their pursuit of Zelda and the Pink Lady. In February, when my husband and I visited The Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast, we decided to walk down to the old Highland site and see if there was any activity. While there we stumbled upon an evening seance in the field and, considering it was freezing and snowing and that the event was not something we felt should be interrupted, we went back to our room instead of investigating the scene. The next morning after a wonderful breakfast, we decided to walk back down to the field to see what we could find, discovering a remaining altar but no other evidence from the night before. Highland Hospital site in Asheville is truly only known for one moment in history, and one has to believe that those who are seeking there are looking for answers to the blaze almost a hundred years ago. Legends help define and draw the lines around in-groups and out-groups so, while Zelda and the Pink Lady may not be central for Paris’s worldview of the paranormal, they do play a crucial role for others. Even in the murky waters of definition, the legends shape the culture around them. They continue to tell the story of an outsider and insider and continue to beg us to answer the question, who gets to write this place's history?

Zelda and the Pink Lady, in their rawest forms, serve a wide range of purposes. To in-groups, like Paris and those who live in Asheville and still seek them, they offer a chance to critically examine history and talk, even if briefly, about whose stories get told, while for the businesses they offer clear avenues to connect the past to the present, while also making a profit off their narratives. The presence of Zelda and the Pink Lady in cultural discourse even today is

in many ways a form of resistance to the narratives thrust upon them in life, while still being a palpable "tellable" narrative in a variety of settings.

"Nothing could have survived our life."
Zelda Fitzgerald*, Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda*

"There have been too many people, too many experiences, too many coincidences and too much consistency over time to write off the Pink Lady as just a fantasy. But who was she? How did she die? Why does she continue to frequent the Grove Park Inn, and make contact with guests and employees? We may never have definitive answers…
Pink Lady Handout from the Omni Grove Park Inn

Finally, you have the outsiders who are moving into or visiting Asheville that may not be seeking the ghost themselves, but are seeking to understand a bit more about Asheville as a place and how that place can change them. For the purpose of this work, there are two kinds of outsiders: those who visit Asheville yet keep their identity separated from Asheville as a place, and those who are new to the area and are putting down roots in hopes of assimilating into the culture until Asheville is their home. These two groups are in very different parts of the legend cycle than the in-groups or businesses and rely more on hearsay, common knowledge, and gut feelings to sift through the information in order to determine which parts of the narrative fit their perception of Asheville, and themselves, and which parts do not.

Both the Pink Lady and Zelda have a special appeal to various populations around the world because of their connections to the rich and famous. The Pink Lady's residence at one of the most sought after health retreats in the country gives her a unique platform for her story to be spread outside of Asheville, and Zelda's reaching artistic impact into the twenty-first century means some people continue to seek her regardless of their relationship to Asheville as a geographic location. Among those who visit Asheville, but do not necessarily consider it home,

are writers who visit the area of inspiration of their own fictitious pieces, news stations reporting on major incidents, and legend trippers who travel to unique locations with hopes of experiencing whatever phenomenon is purported to occur there.

These outsiders rely on resources, like the businesses mentioned above, works of fiction, online blog posts, etc., to direct them to the stories that are most foundational to understanding Asheville and its paranormal residents. Synthesizing the information in this way means that visitors and recent arrivals enter the legend cycle in an entirely different space than residents or businesses. While residents may have relegated these legends to the fourth and fifth steps (community understanding and obscurity) and the businesses keep it in the third iteration (a well articulated story), outsiders enter at the first step of the cycle (voicing a marginal experience) while having access to other iterations of the cycle through their neighbors, local businesses, and other accounts, which gives them a unique perspective on the legend as a whole. In part, the legend has already been defined for them, yet many of them visit these spaces and read these stories with hopes of starting the cycle for themselves.

It is not only individual seekers who step in and out of the legend cycle, but news stations and other content creators. In a 2016 piece done by WRAL, a Raleigh, North Carolina, news station, titled "Death of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Wife in Asheville has Interesting Twist," the journalist interviews a ghost hunter, asking him to articulate the twist in the story. The hunter tells them of the fire and then of Zelda's ghost left to wander Zillicoa Ave. He states, "I personally know of about four people who have seen charred, shambling, walking figures just walking down the road on Zillicoa."[59] In his narrative he seeks to create a credible story that can connect people to this legend cycle, even if they themselves have never visited Asheville.

[59] WRAL. "Death of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Wife in Asheville has Interesting Twist." WRAL.com. WRAL, March 10, 2016. https://www.wral.com/lifestyles/travel/video/15514807/.

Technology offers a unique opportunity for more people than ever to step in and out of the legend cycle without having to visit or become familiar with a specific place.

These particular kinds of outsiders bring with them a type of ethical quandary in how the legend is propagated among individuals. When approached with care and utilized in thoughtful ways, legends give us avenues by which to express culturally undervalued or silenced norms and a way to verbalize shared experiences that may originally feel isolating but can lead to change. However, when tellers and listeners jump in and out of legends, the stories can perpetuate language that only reinforces existing, harmful societal norms. In this way Zelda continuously endures the injustice she experiences in life as being relegated to F. Scott's wife and not an artist in her own right. Similarly the Pink Lady remains a nameless woman lost to history who serves to prop up the Grove Park Inn, just as in life, if she were a maid, she would have helped generate the income without any of the glory. The nature of these stories gives them the power to challenge power structures in certain legend telling contexts while becoming tools of the oppressor, only perpetuating the cycle in others.

The second group of outsiders are those who move to the area and enter the legend cycle in various ways. These people can often have a unique perspective on the legend cycle and step in and out of its various stages as they establish connections to their new community. For example, part of joining a community for many is to find out the local beliefs and customs, so one may take part in one of the businesses tours of the city, many of which include stories, even if they aren't ghost stories, of The Grove Park Inn and the Fitzgeralds' time in Asheville. Or, another avenue could be to connect with various organizations or religious groups who also have spin-offs of the spiritual presences found throughout the city. However, as more than a short term visitor to the city, you would have the opportunity to ask questions and explore, thus taking

you to the later steps of the legend cycle through your new connections with neighbors or friends. Many newcomers to the area have a unique opportunity to connect with those at the end of the legend cycle while also deciding which part of the cycle they themselves want to step into.

One such person is the owner of the Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast, Alicia Wilson. The Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast was constructed around 1899 by the supervising architect of the Biltmore House, Richard Sharp-Smith.[60] It features striking architectural designs, including a Pink Marble Sink handcarved by Thomas Wolfe's father, clawfoot tubs, and original tile work.[61] The Black Walnut sits in the historic Montford district. Historic Montford is a hodgepodge of historic homes mostly constructed between 1890 and1920 as well as the location of both Highland Hospital and Riverside Cemetery, a historic resting place for many recognizable people in Asheville's history, including William Sydeny Porter, whose pen name was O'Henry, and Thomas Wolfe, author of *Look Homeward, Angel.*[62]

Although the Black Walnut has been in business for many years, Wilson only acquired it in September 2019 and only opened the doors again in November of the same year.[63] She was not drawn to the property for the Montford location or possibility of spirits but rather as a fulfillment of a lifelong dream of owning a bed and breakfast. After graduating from high school she took a road trip through the northeastern United States, staying in bed and breakfasts along the way. She said she knew on that trip that owning a bed and breakfast was something she

[60] "Bed & Breakfast in Downtown Asheville, NC." Black Walnut Bed & Breakfast Inn. Accessed April 22, 2020. https://blackwalnut.com/.

[61] Ibid.

[62] "Montford Area Historic District-- Asheville, North Carolina: A National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary." National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed April 22, 2020. https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/asheville/mon.htm.

[63] Wilson, Alicia. Interview with Megan Tice. February 9, 2020.

would do someday. However, she quickly pivoted into college and then life as an engineer and later a lawyer for DuPont.[64] Recently, after a small push from her oldest son, she decided to return to her earliest dreams of owning a bed and breakfast. She took the plunge, hired a broker, and started touring small towns across America to find the perfect house and location for her new endeavor. She said she fell in love with Asheville immediately and when she found the Black Walnut she knew it was the perfect fit and the place she had to be. She bought the house, started some minor remodeling, and finally, in November, reopened the Black Walnut.[65]

When Zach and I got to the Black Walnut we found a beautiful trip guide in our room with suggestions of things to do in the area. One of the first suggestions was to take a walk right up the street (less than a mile) to the site of Highland Hospital.[66] The next morning over coffee with Wilson and her boyfriend, I asked her about the list of suggestions and about Zelda, curious if that had impacted her decision to purchase the inn. She told me she really did not know anything about the fire and that the book had been included in her purchase of the property. Other than knowing Zelda had died right up the street, she did not know much about it, but she had always been a fan of F. Scott and Zelda. In fact, if she could have a dinner party with anyone in history, they would be at her table.[67] In a surprising twist from other interviews, she asked me if I could tell her the legends of Zelda and the Pink Lady, putting me in the role of a legend conduit and her guide into the legend cycle.

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[64] Wilson, 2020.

[65] Ibid.

[66] "What to do" (handout in book at Black Walnut Bed and Breakfast received from Alicia Wilson, Asheville, North Carolina, Feb. 8, 2020).

[67] Wilson, 2020.

My explanation of the legends to Wilson was her introduction to the cycle. Yet, it was a complicated introduction as I am a researcher, academic, and ultimately outsider who has viewed these stories very differently than community members who use them for their own personal worldview formation. As Ellis says, legends are active behavioral events, so when we as researchers "capture" and write out the legend, the "written texts are already twice removed from the event itself."[68] Because of this, I can only assume I inserted many of my own biases, research questions, and spin on the story, even unintentionally. If she had encountered these narratives from a neighbor who had lived near the Highland site for many years, and/or someone in the neighborhood that had a strange encounter at the site, she might have had a different experience. Similarly, if she had gone on the trolley tour or joined one of the groups that actively seek Asheville spirits, she would have had another. It is not possible to predict at this time which part of the legend cycle she herself will land on or if she will weave in and out of them over the years, but once the legend cycle has been opened up to a new listener, it cannot be closed back up--that narrative, that communal knowledge, is forever with the listener.

Ellis argues "Legends generate meaning and pattern where previously none existed."[69] This seems especially crucial to the "out-group" who is trying to understand and become a part of a new place. The legend may be intangible and transient at first, but the stories, the patterns, the details help one to understand the history that may otherwise not be told of the place they are settling in to call home. The presence of the ghost opens up another side of the community, an untold history to explore and synthesize into one's worldview. Gordon states,

> If haunting describes that which appears to be not there as a seething presence, acting on and off and often meddling with taken-for-granted realities, the ghost is just a sign...that tells you a haunting is taking place. The ghost is not simply a

[68] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults.*

[69] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults.* 116.

> dead or missing person but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life...the way the ghost is haunting, and haunting is a very particular way of knowing what has happened or is happening.[70]

The very act of the haunting presents an avenue for an alternative way of viewing and understanding the world and ultimately creating an in-group identity. While one group may use the act of the haunting to create their identity through legend tripping, another may use the injustice in the story to voice their identity as an oppressed group, and yet another may find the charm a way to connect to a nostalgic past. Seemingly "out-groups" may have the opportunity to see a larger piece of the legend cycle and thus to choose the information they want to assimilate or disregard.

"Death is the only real elegance."
Zelda Fitzgerald*, Save Me the Last Waltz*

Legend cycles expand and wane over the course of their lives. They slowly gutter out for one in-group while another group gets the first spark of the story, and thus the cycle begins again. All groups, whether they be businesses or individuals, insiders or outsiders, are relative. Communities are made up of individuals who change and grow and interact with others in the community and push the legend throughout its cycle. Because people do not live in silos, the legends themselves are impossible to define as stand-alone, untainted accounts. Each account of the legend may in fact be a hundred different accounts put into one. While those who dedicate their lives to uncovering the truth of the paranormal world may use a different metric of value on the legend than either business or a newcomer, they are no more capable of removing the legend and shielding it from the outside world than the businesses are of claiming it as an unchanging

[70] Gordon, *Ghostly Matters.*

part of life. The intangible nature of the legend is what gives it the freedom to wax and wane across a society and its history.

The value and power of each legend lies in its enduring, yet malleable, nature. As Ellis argues, "Legends normally form part of an ongoing discussion and are continually subject to contributions, corrections, comments, and objections from other participants. Unlike tales, which usually are separated from normal conversation and attend without interruption, legends must be seen as communal events, in which the audiences' role is important as the narrators'...in other words legends are not folk literature but folk behavior."[71] The power of the legend, its enduring quality and very core, all lie in its communal nature. Therefore, each of the individuals in the community, as they cycle from out-group to in-group, or vice versa depending on their context, serve only as vectors for the enduring nature of legend telling and sense making. A legend can never truly reach the end of its cycle. Regardless of how long it takes for the next vector to pick up the strands of the narrative and carry it forward, the communal boundaries that the legend reoriented have shaped a generation, or at least a particular group within that generation.

Group identity is not an immovable designation and thus the legend will continue to find vectors that claim, alter, perform, and then release the legend to begin its cycle anew. The legend grows, it breathes, it changes, it is silenced, and it roars back to life again. Legends serve as a guide to history and help us create language and framework to discuss the things we don't yet know how to discuss, while at the same time serving as cultural barometers. Zelda and the Pink Lady do all these things and so many more, as they push up against society's accepted norms and beliefs, and start to shift the moral compass direction of the tellers and listeners. They thus encourage tellers and listeners to contemplate some of the rarely explored parts of Asheville's

[71] Ellis, *Aliens, Ghosts, and Cults.*

community identity, including the tension between insider and outsider culture, it's complicated history as a tourist and health retreat, the specific mistreatment of patients at Highland Hospital, and a more general dismissal of both the contributions and the suffering of women, both wealthy and working class. Even though the legends are intangible, they are worthwhile. Zelda and the Pink Lady clearly show us that in certain cases legends exist in multiple cycles simultaneously and that people's motivations for sharing and participating in the legend cycle are as different as the individual. Their spirits are particularly active in the Asheville community in shaping culture because of the long precedent of insider versus outsider culture that has shaped the community from the inside out. For those local to Asheville, Zelda and the Pink Lady may seem overworked and a part of the outsider culture, while for some of the businesses that exist in the community, they are a key piece of their business model. Yet both groups recognize their legend as active in shaping the community. Others just entering the Asheville sphere may choose which parts of the legend to assimilate into their understanding of the space they are inhabiting, and those ideas may change over time. In Asheville, as elsewhere, a legend can reignite any time a new individual enters the cycle.

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